



# Brownfields Assessment Pilots

## *Land-of-Sky Regional Council, NC*

### BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the Land-of-Sky Regional Council for a Brownfields Assessment Pilot. The Land-of-Sky Regional Council represents Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties (population 344,472) in western North Carolina. Throughout the first half of the 1900s, road transportation began to eclipse the railroad and diverted traffic away from river basins, negatively impacting the timber, textile, tanning, and paper milling industries. Numerous factories and mills were forced to close due to poor economic conditions. Many of these old properties remain neglected or underused due to real or perceived contamination. New businesses have looked to rural areas for development opportunities. The council has targeted three sites, including a 2.3-acre ice-distribution warehouse and a 1-acre former tannery, both in the French Broad Riverfront area of Asheville, and a vacant former wood treating facility in the Town of Fletcher. Additional target properties may be assessed after a region-wide inventory of brownfields is completed.

Within the two census tracts in the Asheville target area (population 6,325), poverty rates range from 23 to 34 percent, compared to 11.5 percent for the region. Between 7 and 16 percent of target-area residents are unemployed, compared to 4.3 percent for the region. The area has a large minority population, with African-Americans accounting for 79 percent of the population in one census tract and 13 percent in the other, compared to 5.7 percent for the surrounding areas.

### OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Pilot is to implement a collaborative, region-wide process for identifying and prioritizing brownfields for assessment and future redevelopment. As part of this objective, the Pilot funds will establish a Land-of-Sky Regional Brownfields Advisory Group, complete a region-wide inventory of brownfields, conduct Phase I

#### PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Land-of-Sky  
Regional Council,  
North Carolina*

**Date of Announcement:**  
May 2002

**Amount:** \$ 200,000

**Profile:** The Pilot targets brownfields sites in the Land-of-Sky region for the purpose of stimulating economic and environmental recovery from the effects of industrial and residential migration to former greenfields and rural areas.

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**Contacts:**

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Visit the EPA Region 4 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region4/waste/bf/index.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
[www.epa.gov/brownfields](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields)

and Phase II environmental assessments of properties in the French Broad Riverfront area of Asheville, conduct a Phase II environmental assessment of the former wood treating site, prepare cleanup plans, and reach out to the community.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Identifying, characterizing, and prioritizing potential brownfields sites in each county;
- Conducting Phase I and Phase II assessments of the ice facility and the former tannery site in the Asheville target area and additional sites in the region;
- Conducting a Phase II assessment of a former wood treating property;
- Developing cleanup and redevelopment plans for the selected brownfields; and
- Conducting public meetings and other community outreach activities to obtain input from community residents and other stakeholders throughout the process.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*